

**Hardy County Schools
Regular School Board Meeting
Hardy County Board of Education Office
March 3, 2025**

Members Present:

Dixie Bean, President
Melvin Shook Jr., Vice President
Janet Rose
Douglas Hines
Roy Harper – Via Phone

Administrators Present:

Sheena Van Meter, Superintendent
Jennifer Strawderman, Assistant Superintendent
Josh See, Director of Transportation/Facilities
Jody Shewbridge, Director of Human Resources
Orrin Staggers, Director of Human Resources and Attendance/Counsel
Jessica Markwood, Director of Instructional Technology, Programs, and CTE

Others Present:

Shawn Cullers
Steve Pendleton
Donna Bodkins
Logan Moyers
Vivian Carr

Public Comments:

Donna Bodkins

I. Call to Order – President

Dixie Bean, President, called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

II. Prayer

Sheena Van Meter opened the meeting with prayer.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Douglas Hines led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Introductions

Introductions were made around the room.

VI. Presentation

A. Maintenance and Transportation Updates – Josh See

Mr. Josh See, Director of Transportation and Facilities, provided a copy of the work orders.

Mr. Josh See informed the Board that a fire marshal inspection was conducted at all schools, with the results still pending. The inspection proceeded smoothly, with only minor infractions that do not pose any significant concerns. Additionally, the Fire Marshal returned to inspect the exterior gym at Moorefield Elementary School. Mr. See confirmed that the facility is now available for use. When Mr. Melvin Shook inquired whether the facility was currently in use, Dr. Van Meter was uncertain. Mr. See also mentioned that local providers were unable to meet the requirements for the necessary flooring work, so companies from Virginia and Maryland have been contacted for quotes. Regarding the recent boiler inspection, Mr. See reported that all hot water heaters and kitchen kettles were thoroughly checked, and only three pop-off valves required replacement across three different water heaters. Furthermore, the Epic Lot has been successfully de-winterized and is now operational; 300 commodities were also delivered. The department has transitioned to a new work order app, which was introduced after a month of preparation. The new system is more cost-effective and will be more user-friendly starting in April.

Mr. Josh See informed the Board that Dr. Van Meter had sent an email regarding concerns about the electricity billing, Mr. See asked Potomac Edison for clarification. In response, a contact from the electric company explained that there are multiple billing rates across the schools, with some accounts on a demand rate and others grandfathered into different rates. The demand rate is specific to each school, not a countrywide charge, and any further questions can be addressed by dialing into each individual school account. Ms. Dixie Bean stated they would like additional details as to which schools are on demand rate and what are the rate of the other schools that are grandfathered in. The Board also asked for more information on how they are determining peak demand, the duration of peak usage, and the reset period.

Mr. See also shared that, while they cannot control electricity prices, efforts such as switching to LED lights have reduced the county's kilowatt usage, which is the only factor they can control. A comparison was made between his electric bill and the school district to illustrate how building size and energy usage affect costs. Additionally, Mr. See noted that East Hardy High School's electric usage is high due to its electric heaters, which have contributed to increased cold temperatures this winter. He emphasized the need for more energy-efficient practices and pointed out that some of the smaller buildings, such as Moorefield Elementary School, have yet to undergo LED upgrades, which could further reduce energy costs.

Mr. See advised the Board he would seek more information from Potomac Edison.

Ms. See asked what other work order questions the Board had and reminded them they still did not have an electrician.

Ms. Dixie Bean asked about the work order for the blinds at East Hardy Elementary School, inquiring about what was going on with the installation. Mr. Josh See explained that blinds had been ordered for all classrooms based on teacher preferences. However, because the window frames are metal, installing the blinds has been problematic as it burns bits, which takes about two bits per blind. Since the work cannot be done while students are in the classrooms, the installation has been put on hold. It is planned to resume either during spring break or in the summer. Mr. See also mentioned that the school purchased the blinds but did not know why the teachers preferred them.

Mr. Melvin Shook inquired about the gym doors at Moorefield Middle School, to which Mr. Josh See responded that they are just waiting on Mr. Sean Sicker with Mountain State Locking Company. He has ordered the interior locking back, and they are simply waiting for them to arrive. Mr. See confirmed that the purchase order has been processed, and everything is in place; they are just waiting for him to come complete the work.

Ms. Janet Rose asked what services ASAP provided. In response, Mr. Josh See explained that ASAP installs and works on various systems, including doors, intercoms, and fire alarms.

B. CTE and Technology Updates – Jessica Markwood

Ms. Jessica Markwood provided an update to the Board regarding Career and Technical Education (CTE) following the conclusion of CTE Month. She shared that the district has successfully applied for and received the GYO grant, totaling \$119,000. This grant will support outreach efforts, expand the GYO Apprenticeship program, and establish an internal process for tracking apprenticeship hours. The program allows the district to train future teachers while they complete their college education and fulfill apprenticeship hours. Additionally, the grant will fund a county apprenticeship coordinator and launch a community outreach initiative in April, including videography services to promote opportunities within the district.

Ms. Markwood also reported that the district has applied for a \$100,000 federal Farm-to-School Implementation Grant. If awarded, the funds will be used to repair or replace refrigeration equipment in CTE agriculture labs, support farm-to-table initiatives, and use high tunnels and greenhouses to supply fresh produce to school cafeterias. Any surplus produce will be made available for community pick-up events during the summer or sold to help sustain the program. Discussion followed regarding the management of produce distribution. Ms. Markwood explained that current distribution aligns with existing Launchpad hours, and the district is exploring hiring a staff member to oversee operations. Mr. Melvin Shook asked what the hours are at the Launchpad. Ms. Markwood stated the hours are Wednesday and Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every week. While students will earn work-based learning hours through the program, they will not be paid. The program requires an adult supervisor, such as a certified teacher or long-term substitute, to ensure proper oversight.

Ms. Markwood also highlighted upcoming events, including the CTE awards ceremony on May 14th with the reception at 5:30 p.m. and the awards ceremony at 6:00 p.m. at the high school auditorium and the Ham, Bacon, and Egg Sale on March 14th with the reception at 4:00 p.m. and the action starting at 5:30 p.m. She encouraged Board members to support and promote CTE initiatives. Additionally, she recognized Lacey Kesner, an agriculture teacher, for achieving National Board Certification and announced that she will be honored at the state ceremony on March 11th.

The Board was also informed of the continued success of the DECA program, which recently earned gold-level certification for its school-based enterprise. This makes it the only program in the state with this distinction for seven consecutive years. The DECA team will compete at the state level this weekend, with winners advancing to the international competition in April. Ms. Markwood concluded by encouraging board members to follow CTE's social media pages and visit the updated CTE website, which now features student and teacher profiles to further promote the department's initiatives.

Ms. Jessica Markwood also provided an update on technology, noting progress in rolling over iPads and subscribing to AppleCare. She reported that only two cases remain open, and the logistics of receiving, shipping, and replacing devices have significantly reduced student downtime. The work order system is now fully operational, more cost-effective than before, and all principals have had access to it.

Additionally, once the federal grant windows open, the district plans to apply for the COPPES Grant and the Homeland Security Grant. If awarded, these funds will be used to update the camera systems at Moorefield Elementary School and Moorefield Intermediate School.

VII. Public Comments

Ms. Donna Bodkins addressed the Board regarding the custodial staffing challenges at Moorefield Middle School. She emphasized the ongoing issue of custodial shortages, noting that while the school is allocated 2.6 custodians, they have rarely had full staffing, with only around 15 days this year meeting that level. With over 62 rooms in the building, cleanliness remains a concern. Despite having 11 substitute custodians listed, only four have ever worked at the school, and efforts to contact them or the emergency custodian staff have been largely unsuccessful.

Given these difficulties, some teachers have expressed willingness to work additional hours in the evening to assist with cleaning, provided they receive extra compensation. Additionally, Ms. Bodkins suggested exploring using Co-op students for cleaning duties at the central office, as the current part-time custodian assigned there seems reluctant to work in that location. She stressed the need for solutions, as maintaining a clean environment is crucial for staff and students.

VIII. Consent Items

A. Board Minutes – February 17, 2025

On the motion of Janet Rose, seconded by Douglas Hines, the Board approved Consent Items.

5-0 motion carried

IX. Unfinished Business

A. Update on Moorefield Track Project – MHS Athletic Boosters

Mr. Logan Moyers from the Moorefield High School Athletic Boosters addressed the board regarding the remaining work needed on the track project. He emphasized the importance of confirming that funding is secured before proceeding. The rubberization of the track surface is planned for June, aligning with the track season's end. Previously, \$100,000 was allocated for this work, and additional funding from the governor has since become available, allowing the initial funds to be redirected towards other track improvements.

The proposed work includes leveling the area around the track with crusher run material to eliminate tripping hazards caused by a 6-8 inch height difference due to seating stabilization. The drainage system around the track will be completed with an extensive installation. Additionally, a new storage solution is needed as the current mini-barn is overfilled and in danger of collapse. Mr. Moyers suggested replacing it with two 20-foot one-trip shipping containers, which would be more durable and better suited for the needs of both the track and middle school football teams.

The long jump and discus areas also require significant improvements. The long jump runway is too narrow and short, and the sand pit needs renovation. The discus area has bent poles and requires repositioning to meet specifications. Furthermore, the locker room facilities need updating, with a proposal to eliminate the current coach's office and convert it into an additional locker room for the girls' track team. The existing locker rooms will be combined into one larger space, and an interior door will be added to provide easier access to bathrooms at the opposite end of the building.

Mr. Moyers requested clarification regarding whether the funding for the additional renovations is already secured and whether approval is required to repurpose the previously allocated funds for this new initiative. He also noted that contractors familiar with the project are ready to begin, though all necessary bidding procedures must be followed. The board expressed support for the project, and the discussion ended with Dr. Sheena Van Meter stating that coordination with Ms. Sarah Earle is essential to ensure all bid requirements are met and vendor packets are completed before any work proceeds.

X. New Business

A. Approval of Changes to the 2024-2025 School Calendar

On the motion of Douglas Hines, seconded by Janet Rose, the Board approved the superintendent's recommendation to add the make-up day to the end of the 2024-2025 School Calendar.

5-0 motion carried

B. Discussion of Proposed 2025-2026 School Calendar

Dr. Sheena Van Meter inquired whether it was acceptable to proceed with sending the two calendars, presented by Mr. Josh See during the recent calendar hearing, to the Board for a vote. The calendars included a proposed Hardy County development calendar and the approved Grant Pendleton calendar. The Board agreed to move forward with sending the calendars out for a vote.

C. Approval of Mowing Bid for Each Campus

On the motion of Melvin Shook, seconded by Dixie Bean, the Board approved RKM Services LLC as the winning mowing bid for all three campuses as presented. The Board requested that the contract include the addition of at least four inches of mulch to be applied twice a year and weed-eating to be performed each time the grass is mowed.

4-0 motion carried
1 abstained – Douglas Hines

D. Approval of the Dual Credit Courses Update

On the motion of Janet Rose, seconded by Douglas Hines, the Board approved the Dual Credit Courses as presented.

5-0 motion carried

XI. Board Members/Superintendent Discussion – No Action May Be Taken

A. PRO-Officer Report

Dr. Sheena Van Meter handed out the PRO report for the Board to review and advised the Board that if they had any questions, they could let her know or discuss it at the next meeting.

Dr. Sheena Van Meter discussed a request from WELD and Mr. Chip Combs for the Hardy County Board to sign a proclamation declaring March 2025 as "Music in Our Schools Month" in West Virginia. The proclamation recognizes the importance of music education as part of a well-rounded curriculum, its positive impact on students' academic and personal growth, and its role in engagement with learning. Signing the proclamation would also support special announcements throughout March, with funding sourced from businesses, a portion of which would support music education initiatives in the schools. Board members agreed to sign the document.

Dr. Sheena Van Meter presented confidential student performance data, excluding names, to provide insight into alternative students' benchmark progress in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. The data included two charts showing first and second benchmark scores, with a column indicating growth. Seniors were not included as they had completed state assessments and were focused on college and career readiness. Some students lacked second benchmark scores due to attendance issues or facility placement.

Dr. Sheena Van Meter informed the Board that \$5,000 from last year's competition funds was allocated to support the robotics team. The funds were sent to Moorefield Middle School to help cover expenses for their next competition. She advised the Board that the team had advanced to the international competition in Houston.

Dr. Sheena Van Meter discussed the annual principal's presentations with the Board, and it was decided they would take place on April 15th. She will provide Board members with a list of information from last year's meeting and ask the Board to let her know if they would like any additional changes.

Dr. Sheena Van Meter advised the Board that, due to levy rate requirements, the board meeting initially scheduled for April 22nd will need to be moved to April 15th.

Dr. Sheena Van Meter discussed school visit dates with the Board. Below is the schedule she has confirmed.

- **East Hardy High School:** March 4th, 12:30 to 2:00 p.m., for staff discussions.
- **Moorefield High School:** Board members will visit assigned classrooms, with one member per room to minimize disruption. The Board can be available during lunch to speak with teachers if they wish as needed.
- **East Hardy Elementary School:** March 28th, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., watch hallway huddles and a student panel discussion.
- **Moorefield Elementary:** March 24th, 8:30 to 11:00 a.m., with a request for one to two people to visit as many rooms as possible and provide feedback afterward.

She has not received responses from Moorefield Middle and Moorefield Intermediate schools but plans to follow up. If they do not respond soon, alternative dates will be considered. She is also working with Ms. Campbell to reschedule Moorefield High School's visit date.

Mr. Douglas Hines inquired about an incident at the basketball game. Dr. Sheena Van Meter clarified that two students were involved; however, an adult made a comment to students. The adult, identified as being from Petersburg, received a letter stating they are prohibited from being on Hardy County School property for a period of 365 days. The letter was issued by the school principal in response to the incident.

Mr. Melvin Shook advised the Board that the robotics team is holding a pancake dinner fundraiser on March 7th. The event will take place from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

XII. Future Agenda Items

- PRO Officers – April 7, 2025

XIII. Announcements

- March 17, 2025 – Public Calendar Hearing – EHES – 4:30 p.m.
- March 17, 2025 – Hardy County Board of Education Meeting – EHES – 5:00 p.m.

XIV. Mission Statements/Accomplishments

- The Board commended Moorefield High School's DECA program for receiving the Outstanding School-Based Enterprise award and also recognized Amy Crites, their advisor, for her exceptional leadership.
- The Board commended the students who came in support of Mr. Mechling.
- The Board commended Moorefield Middle School's basketball team for winning the Potomac Valley League championship for three consecutive years.
- The Board commended the wrestling teams for sending 11 wrestlers from Hardy County to compete in the state championship.
- The Board commended Ms. Lacey Kesner for being awarded her National Board Certification.
- The Board commended the robotics teams for earning the right to compete in the international competition, recognizing their hard work and impressive accomplishments.

XV. Personnel

On the motion of Janet Rose, seconded by Douglas Hines, the Board approved the following:

Professional Personnel Transfer:

- Scott Mechling: From Teacher, Social Studies, MHS (due to the necessary reconfiguration of staffing needs at MHS for the 2025-2026 SY)

4-0 motion carried

1 abstained – Roy Harper, did not attend the hearing.

On the motion of Douglas Hines, seconded by Janet Rose, the Board approved the following:

Leave of Absences:

- Anna Parker: February 24, 2025 through August 7, 2025
- Teresa Myers: March 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025 – Intermittent as Needed

Days Without Pay:

- Lauren Smith: February 20, 2025 – 1 Day
- Penny Wolfe: February 24, 2025 and March 6, 2025 – 2 Days

Service Personnel Hiring:

- Lacey Koontz: Substitute Secretary, Countywide; Effective March 18, 2025

Service Personnel Transfers:

- Teresa Cook: Cook, half-time, MHS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to the reconfiguration of staffing needs at MHS)
- Stephanie Whetzel: Aide, Special Education, Itinerant, MIS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to the reconfiguration of staffing needs within the county special education program)

Service Personnel Terminations:

- Deanna Kivett: Cook, EHHS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to the reconfiguration of staffing needs, the displacement and transfer of a more senior employee and lack of seniority)

Service Personnel Terminations of Extra-Curricular Contracts:

- Lisa Walker: Extra-Curricular Bus Run #1; Effective June 30, 2025, (The Extra Curricular Bus Run may not be needed, or changes may need to be made for the 2025-2026 SY)
- Ralph Rinker: Extra-Curricular Bus Run #2; Effective June 30, 2025, (The Extra Curricular Bus Run may not be needed, or changes may need to be made for the 2025-2026 SY)
- Deborah Phares: Extra-Curricular Bus Run #3; Effective June 30, 2025, (The Extra Curricular Bus Run may not be needed, or changes may need to be made for the 2025-2026 SY)

Professional Personnel Hiring:

- Baylee Matthew Allanson: Substitute Teacher, Countywide; Effective 2024-2025 SY

Professional Personnel Extra-Curricular Hiring:

- Sara Orndorff: County Virtual School Assistant Coordinator, Countywide; Effective March 4, 2025 for the 2024-2025 SY only

Professional Personnel Transfers:

- Laura Huffman: From Remedial Specialist/Librarian, MES/MMS (due to the necessary reconfiguration of staffing needs at MES/MMS for the 2025-2026 SY)
- Rachel Schetrom: From Teacher, Spanish, EHHS (due to the necessary reconfiguration of staffing needs at EHHS for the 2025-2026 SY)

Professional Personnel Terminations:

- Tina Snyder: Teacher, Special Education, Multi-Categorical, Itinerant, MHS/MMS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to the reconfiguration of staffing needs in the county special education programs for the 2025-2026 SY, elimination of current Special Education position and Snyder's lack of seniority)
- Kimberly Adkins: Teacher, 4th Grade, MIS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to reconfiguration of staffing needs for the 2025-2026 SY resulting in the displacement and transfer of a more senior employee with appropriate certification and Adkins' lack of seniority)
- Jennifer Baker: Teacher, 4th Grade, MIS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to reconfiguration of staffing needs for the 2025-2026 SY resulting in the displacement and transfer of a more senior employee with appropriate certification and Baker's lack of seniority)
- Cynthia Ariza Mejia: Teacher Spanish, MHS/MMS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to reconfiguration of staffing needs for the 2025-2026 SY resulting in the displacement and transfer of a more senior employee with appropriate certification and Ariza Mejia's lack of seniority)
- Gabriella Oliverio: Teacher, Science, EHHS; Effective June 30, 2025 (due to the reconfiguration of staffing needs at EHHS for the 2025-2026 SY, elimination of current position and Oliverio's lack of seniority)

Athletic Hiring:

- Michelle Wolfe: Coach, Cross Country Track, EHHS; Effective 2025-2026 SY

Volunteer:

- Larry Foster: Volunteer, Team Support Personnel, Track, MHS; Effective 2024-2025 SY only

Resignations:

- Casey Redman: Substitute Aide, Countywide; Effective February 19, 2025
- Lacey Koontz: Secretary II/Accountant II, MIS; Effective March 14, 2025

5-0 motion carried

XVI. Adjournment

On the motion of Janet Rose, seconded by Douglas Hines, the meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

5-0 motion carried

Dixie Bean, President

Sheena Van Meter, Secretary